

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAJ-01 IO-14 ACDA-19 SAM-01 DRC-01 /136 W

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P R 291610Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8758

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP, PO

SUBJECT: SPANISH REACTION TO PORTUGUESE POLITICAL EVENTS

1. SUMMARY: SPANISH MEDIA HAVE GIVEN THOROUGH COVERAGE TO PORTUGUESE EVENTS, WITH COMMENTARY FOCUSING PRIMARILY ON JUNTA'S INTENTION TO DEMOCRATIZE PORTUGAL AND ONLY SECONDARILY ON COLONIAL ISSUE. GOS HAS ISSUED NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT BUT, IN CONFORMITY WITH ESTRADA DOCTRINE IS INFORMING GOP OF RECOGNITION OF JUNTA. ALL SEGMENTS OF SPANISH LIFE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN EVENTS IN PORTUGAL AND ANXIOUS TO OBSERVE OUTCOME AND ESTIMATE IMPACT IN SPAIN OF PROPOSED LIBERALIZATION IN PORTUGAL, PARTICULARLY IF FOLLOWED BY POSSIBLE MITTERAND VICTORY IN FRANCE. END SUMMARY

2. SPANISH MEDIA HAVE GIVEN PROMINENT AND FULL COVERAGE TO ALL ASPECTS OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. PROCLAMATION OF JUNTA OF NATIONAL SALVATION HAVE BEEN PRINTED IN FULL. TV HAS BROADCAST FILM CLIPS AND INTERVIEWS WITH SPINOLA BY SPANISH CORRESPONDENT. PRESS COMMENTARY HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY FAVORABLE EXCEPT BEGINNING APRIL 28 WHEN COMMENTATORS FIRST BEGAN MENTIONING POSSIBILITY THAT

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EVENTS MIGHT GET OUT OF MILITARY'S CONTROL WITH LEFTIST

MOVEMENTS EXERTING INCREASING INFLUENCE.

3. IN GENERAL, OBSERVERS ALL AGREE THAT REVOLT BY MILITARY WAS INEVITABLE INASMUCH AS CAETANO'S PRESTIGE HAD BEEN SAPPED AND COST OF COLONIAL WARS HAD PROVEN UNBEARABLE FOR PORTUGAL, WHOSE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS HAD ATROPHIED. CAETANO PORTRAYED AS MAN WHO LOST OPPORTUNITY TO END SALAZARISM, WHICH TASK HAS NOW BEEN CARRIED OUT BY PORTUGUESE MILITARY. FAILURE TO INNOVATE FOLLOWING SALAZAR'S DEATH SEEN AS PROLONGATION OF SALAZAR SYSTEM. SPANISH CORRESPONDENTS PRAISE MILITARY FOR DECLARED INTENTIONS TO DEMOCRATIZE PORTUGUESE LIFE BY HOLDING GENERAL ELECTIONS BASED ON UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE AND SECRET VOTE, DISSOLUTION OF SINGLE PARTY, SUSPENSION OF CENSORSHIP, REESTABLISHMENT OF FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION, AND LIBERATION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. FORM OF PRESENTATION OF COMMENTS BY SOME EDITORIALISTS INDICATE INTENTION TO HAVE READERS DRAW PARALLELS WITH SPANISH SITUATION AND DESIRABILITY OF WORKING TOWARDS SAME GOALS PROCLAIMED BY MILITARY JUNTA IN PORTUGAL.

4. GOS HAS MADE NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT RE PORTUGUESE EVENTS BUT RANKING MFA OFFICIAL TOLD DCM APRIL 29 THAT GOS WAS INFORMING GOP OF RECOGNITION OF JUNTA GOVERNMENT. PORTUGUESE SITUATION AND FRENCH PRE-ELECTORAL SITUATION WERE DISCUSSED IN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRED BY FRANCO ON APRIL 25. ON SAME DAY IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL SAID SPAIN WOULD FOLLOW ESTRADA DOCTRINE. EUROPA PRESS AGENCY ALSO PUBLISHED TEXT OF 1940 IBERIAN PACT BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN WHICH INCLUDES PLEDGE OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS AS WELL AS PLEDGE NOT TO CARRY OUT ANY AGGRESSIVE ACTION AGAINST FRONTIER OR TERRITORY OF PARTNER. MFA OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT MFA IS FOLLOWING EVENTS CLOSELY IN PORTUGAL BELIEVING THEY ARE OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE TO SPAIN. PRESS AND OFFICIALS HAVE NOTED WITH INTEREST SPINOLA'S RESPONSE TO SPANISH JOURNALIST APRIL 26 SAYING THAT "THE ORIENTATION WHICH WILL BE GIVEN TO PORTUGUESE POLICY WILL FACILITATE TO A LARGE DEGREE RELATIONS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN." MEMBERS OF SPANISH CORTES MADE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATEMENTS APRIL 26 EXPRESSING GENERAL HOPE THAT PORTUGAL'S FUTURE WOULD BE PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS.

5. ACCORDING TO DAO SOURCES, SPANISH MILITARY WAS EXTREMELY WELL INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY REVOLT IN PORTUGAL. SPINOLA HIMSELF IS HIGHLY RESPECTED AND REMEMBERED FOR HIS PARTICIPATION ON NATIONALIST SIDE DURING CIVIL WAR. HIS BOOK, WHICH HELPED LAY

GROUNDWORK FOR PRESENT CHANGES IN PORTUGAL, HAS ALREADY BEEN PUBLISHED IN EXCERPTS BY SPAIN'S MOST RESPECTED NEWSPAPER, LA VANGUARDIA, AND MADRID'S MOST INDEPENDENT DAILY, INFORMACIONES, AND IS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLICATION IN TOTO THIS WEEK. SEVERAL HIGH NAVAL OFFICERS TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 27 OF THEIR KEEN INTEREST IN PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH THEY SAW AS MOVING IN DIRECTION OF FULL LIBERALIZATION WITH LITTLE PROSPECT OF REACTION AMONG CONSERVATIVE SECTORS OF ARMED FORCES. OPPOSITION LEADERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO EVALUATE ULTIMATE GOALS OF PORTUGUESE MILITARY LEADERSHIP WHICH COULD TURN OUT TO BE MORE CONSERVATIVE THAN THEIR INITIAL PROMISES.

6. SOME SPANISH OBSERVERS NOTE THAT SPAIN MIGHT BE FACED WITH NEW SITUATION WITH ITS TWO EUROPEAN NEIGHBORS IF NEW PORTUGUESE REGIME ADOPTS PERMANENTLY LIBERAL POLICIES AND FRANCE'S SOCIALIST LEADER MITTERAND IS ELECTED PRESIDENT MAY 5. UPHEAVAL IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRY EXPECTED TO HAVE SOME POLITICAL IMPACT HERE, WITH OPPOSITION DRAWING ENCOURAGEMENT FROM EVENTS THERE, WHILE CONSERVATIVE AND REACTIONARY FORCES SEEING IT AS FURTHER REASON TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY ON LIBERALIZATION. SPANISH OBSERVERS ALSO INCLINED TO POINT OUT THAT COUP ITSELF HAS LIMITED APPLICABILITY TO SPANISH SITUATION SINCE TWO MAJOR FACTORS, FRUSTRATING COLONIAL WAR AND PROLONGED ECONOMIC STAGNATION, ARE NOTABLY ABSENT FROM SPANISH SCENE.

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